

JIGSAW PUZZLE INCLUDING SCRATCH AND SNIFF PUZZLE PIECES

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Not Applicable.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not Applicable.

REFERENCE TO A MICROFICHE APPENDIX

Not Applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates to jigsaw puzzles and, more particularly, to a jigsaw puzzle including scratch and sniff puzzle pieces.

PRIOR ART

A jigsaw puzzle includes a plurality of pieces that can be assembled to form an image. The plurality of pieces are joined by means of a plurality of interlocking male and female elements, which are part of the edges of the different pieces. In most cases, two adjacent pieces are joined together by a male element that is part of the edge of the first piece, and a female element, that is part of the second piece, ensuring that the two pieces remain interlocked.

The interlocking feature of jigsaw puzzles enables a user to assemble the puzzle at a pace that suits his/her desires and still maintain the portion that has been completed. This feature is important because many puzzles are complicated and challenging to a user and take time to assemble.

The challenge of putting the interlocking pieces together correctly to form an image is part of the fun of assembling puzzles and attracts many people to puzzles. The process of assembling puzzles is both mentally challenging and emotionally gratifying. However, with practice, the art of assembling puzzles becomes easier and

less challenging over time. As a result, a need exists for method of modifying a normal puzzle in order to challenge experienced users and provide new features to the common puzzle.

Because the sense of smell is often used by individuals to identify objects, the addition of scents or aromas to puzzle pieces could help users learn and decipher the puzzle's complexity or provide a pleasing scent to a user while working on the puzzle. Many aromas stimulate the olfactory organs in a manner that people find pleasing and this would make the process of assembling puzzles even more enjoyable.

The concept of using scents on puzzle pieces for helping children learn is disclosed by U.S. Pat. No. 4,243,224 to Spector. This patent discloses an educational learning device for children to use in matching scents to objects such as fruit and vegetables, but is not a typical puzzle that involves matching interlocking puzzle pieces.

Accordingly, a need remains for a jigsaw puzzle including scratch and sniff puzzle pieces.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In view of the foregoing background, it is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an apparatus for a jigsaw puzzle including scratch and sniff puzzle pieces. These and other objects, features, and advantages of the invention are provided by a jigsaw puzzle including a plurality of puzzle pieces having substantially planar top and bottom surfaces. Select ones of the plurality of puzzle pieces have at least one substantially planar sidewall for forming a portion of a perimeter of the puzzle. The plurality of puzzle pieces include a body and a plurality of notch portions integral with the body and extend substantially inwardly thereof. Select ones of the plurality of notch portions may be spaced from at least one substantially planar sidewall.

The plurality of puzzle pieces further include a plurality of flange portions integral with the body and engageable with corresponding ones of the plurality of notch portions so that the plurality of puzzle pieces can be removably attached to each other. Select ones of the puzzle pieces may include a plurality of flange portions and corresponding ones of the puzzle pieces may include a plurality of notch portions for receiving the plurality of flange portions.

The plurality of puzzle pieces further include a scented layer having a top surface formed to be substantially corrugated and being disposed on the top surface of the plurality of puzzle pieces respectively, and extending upwardly therefrom. The scented layer contacts at least one substantially planar sidewall.

The scented layer further includes a plurality of cells impregnated with a plurality of predetermined aromas, respectively, which are releasable when a user scratches the scented layer. The plurality of puzzle pieces may further include an indicia providing a visual representation of the plurality of scented aromas respectively disposed on the top surface thereof.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING

The novel features believed to be characteristic of this invention are set forth with particularity in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, both as to its organization and method of operation, together with further objects and advantages thereof, may best be understood by reference to the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing a plurality of puzzle pieces, in accordance with the present invention; and

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of a puzzle piece shown in FIG. 1 taken along line 2-2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention will now be described more fully hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which a preferred embodiment of the invention is shown. This invention may, however, be embodied in many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiment set forth herein. Rather, this embodiment is provided so that this application will be thorough and complete, and will fully convey the true scope of the invention to those skilled in the art.

The apparatus of this invention is referred to generally in FIGS. 1-2 by the reference numeral 10 and is intended to provide a jigsaw puzzle including scratch and

sniff puzzle pieces. It should be understood that the jigsaw puzzle 10 may be used to depict many different images and may contain a variety of aromas.

Referring to FIG. 1, the jigsaw puzzle 10 includes a plurality of puzzle pieces 20 having substantially planar top 21 and bottom 22 surfaces, as perhaps best shown in FIG. 2. Select ones of the plurality of puzzle pieces 20 have at least one substantially planar sidewall 23 for forming a portion of a perimeter of the jigsaw puzzle 10. The plurality of puzzle pieces 20 include a body 24 and a plurality of notch portions 25 integral with the body 24 and extending substantially inwardly thereof. Select ones of the plurality of notch portions 25 are spaced from at least one substantially planar sidewall 23.

The plurality of puzzle pieces 20 further include a plurality of flange portions 30 integral with the body 24 and engageable with corresponding ones of the plurality of notch portions 25 so that the plurality of puzzle pieces 20 can be removably attached to each other. Select ones of the puzzle pieces 20 include a plurality of flange portions 30 and corresponding ones of the puzzle pieces 20 include a plurality of notch portions 25 for receiving the plurality of flange portions 30. The jigsaw puzzle 10 may be formed in many different shapes and sizes including many different images or scenes.

Now referring to FIG. 2, the plurality of puzzle pieces 20 further include a scented layer 40 having a top surface 41 formed to be substantially corrugated and being disposed on the top surface 21 of the plurality of puzzle pieces 20 and extending upwardly therefrom. The scented layer 40 contacts at least one substantially planar sidewall 23.

The scented layer 40 further includes a plurality of cells 50 impregnated with a plurality of predetermined aromas 42, respective, which are releasable when a user scratches the scented layer 40. The plurality of scented aromas 42 include a broad spectrum of aromas that simulate odors or scents well known in the art. The plurality of scented aromas 42 are releasable when a user selectively scratches the scented layer 40. Because of the high density of the plurality of scented aromas 42, the scented layer 40 may be scratched many times and still produce the desired scent with each scratching.

Referring back to FIG.1, the plurality of puzzle pieces 20 further include an indicia 60 providing a visual representation of the plurality of scented aromas 42 respectively and disposed on the top surface 41 thereof. The indicia 60 may depict a variety of different images or may depict a single image when the plurality of puzzle pieces 20 are removably attached to each other.

The jigsaw puzzle 10 may be formed featuring a plurality of indicia 60 and scents or it may be formed with a single indicia 60 and scent. The jigsaw puzzle 10 would provide a unique alternative to a standard puzzle and would also be an ideal conversation piece. The jigsaw puzzle 10 would make a great gift for individuals who enjoy puzzles and would have special appeal to people who enjoy scented items.

While the invention has been described with respect to a certain specific embodiment, it will be appreciated that many modifications and changes may be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit of the invention. It is intended, therefore, by the appended claims to cover all such modifications and changes as fall within the true spirit and scope of the invention.

In particular, with respect to the above description, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the present invention may include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation. The assembly and use of the present invention are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art.